Latino Microenterprise Tech Net
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Latino Microenterprise Tech Net?
The Latino Microenterprise Tech Net will equip 17 public computer centers in 10 states with over 300 workstations providing computer access and bilingual computer training to low- to moderate-income Latinos, with emphasis on serving Latino entrepreneurs. The primary goals of LMTN are to (1) increase broadband and technology usage by low- and moderate-income Latinos, and (2) to provide customized bilingual computer training to help entrepreneurs establish and expand businesses in order to create jobs.

What will it accomplish?
Over the next three years, the Latino Microenterprise Tech Net will create or retain more than 2,100 jobs in ten states. To accomplish this, we expect to train 15,000 individuals and reach 45,000 through open lab access.

Is the project about having access to computers?
While part of this project offers open access to computers, the primary goal is to create employment in Latino communities. Computers are critical to starting a business today—by having access and relevant training, entrepreneurs can access the resources they need to make establish their business. Business owners who are able to make their businesses more efficient through integrating technology may be able to hire additional workers or retain employees in danger of being let go.

What is the expected impact on small business owners?
Latino small business owners, having access to free bilingual training on important topics, will be able to integrate computer technology into their operations and make them more efficient. For example, a business owner who is able to better market a business using the Internet might see an increase in sales, allowing them to create new jobs.

What is the potential impact on other direct service delivery at MEDA, such as Financial Education & Homeownership Counseling?
All services offered at MEDA will benefit from the new Plaza Adelante computer center. Financial Education clients can learn to pull their own credit reports online, master online banking, and create dynamic budgets. Homeownership clients can learn to use the Internet to look for homebuyer products such as loans and special programs, use online tools such as HomebuyerGo, and communicate more easily and quickly with MEDA and lender staff.

What will change at Plaza Adelante?
Plaza Adelante will be equipped with a new 30 station lab funded through BTOP and managed by CAMINOS Pathways Learning Center. Fully equipped with workstations, printers, scanners, projectors, software, T1 Internet access and a bilingual training curriculum, the lab will offer clients a professional workspace. Plaza Adelante will become busier with the influx of people participating in training. We will offer wireless throughout the building, self-service kiosks with information on services in the lobby, and we expect to be able to implement a community-wide wireless network in later phases of this project.

Are there other programs like LMTN locally or in California?
This is the only existing technology training network for microenterprise development in the San Francisco Bay Area. LMTN will also have two sites in Los Angeles, and Canoga Park, California.

How is the project organized?
LMTN brings together 12 non-profit organizations, all members of the National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB). MEDA is the Program Manager and CAMINOS Pathways Learning Center is the Technical Manager. Every partner organization will receive computer workstations, printers, scanners, projectors, software and licenses. Software will be housed on a central server at Plaza Adelante, similar to an enterprise thin-client model. The standardized bilingual curriculum will address both basic digital literacy and more targeted modules specific to micro-entrepreneurs, including Quickbooks, Excel for Budgeting, E-Commerce, Online Marketing.

Who are LMTN partners?
LMTN has a diverse group of partners who work on asset building in Latino communities nationwide. All organizations are multi-faceted and provide direct services such as small business development, home ownership counseling, workforce

development, and existing community technology centers. Several partner organizations are non-profit housing developers.

Partners Include:
- Lead Agency/Project Manager: Mission Economic Development Agency, San Francisco, CA
- Technical Manager: CAMINOS Pathways Learning Center, San Francisco, CA
- Avenida Guadalupe Association, San Antonio, TX
- Azteca Economic Development & Preservation Corporation, Laredo, TX
- Chicanos Por La Causa, Phoenix, AZ
- Colorado Rural Housing Development Corporation, Del Norte, CO
- Hispanic Economic Development Corporation, Kansas City, MO
- Latino Economic Development Center, Wheaton, MD
- Latino Economic and Development Center, Blackfoot, ID
- New Economics for Women, Los Angeles, CA
- Norris Square Civic Association, Philadelphia, PA
- Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, Anthony, NM
- Consortium Coordinator: National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders, San Antonio, TX

Who is NALCAB?
The National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders is a membership organization of over 60 Latino-led organizations from 20 states and the District of Columbia. NALCAB's mission is to build financial and human assets as well as real estate and technology resources in Latino families, communities, and organizations. NALCAB played an important role in organizing the Latino Microenterprise Tech Net.

What are the common goals of the partner agencies?
All partner agencies focus on building and retaining assets in Latino communities.

How is LMTN funded?
MEDA and the partner network applied for federal support from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009. Federal funds provide for $3,724,128.00 over 3 years. The partner matching funds commitment is $2,483,855.00 over 3 years, or 40% of the total investment of $6,207,983.00.

What are the project's main expenditures over the 3-year period?
The total federal budget for the project is $3,724,128.00 over 3 years. The highest expenditures are in Year 1 and decrease in subsequent years. Equipment purchases make up the largest portion of the first year budget. The largest yearly expenditures are allocated to training, internet access, and technical support, which remain fairly constant over the three year term.

Can private entities participate in this project? If so, how?
Yes, private entities are encouraged to become part of this project through volunteer support, technical assistance, in-kind or cash donations. Important corporate donations have already been received that will add value to the project. If you or your company would like to participate in the project, please contact Jillian Spindle at 415.282.3334, x116 or jspindle@medasf.org

What are the 3-year and 5-year plans for this project?
For the next three years MEDA, Caminos and all of our partner organizations will be working to accomplish the goal of creating 2,100 jobs in low- to moderate-income Latino communities. There are many opportunities to keep all 17 partner computer labs open and functioning after the original federally-funded scope of work has been completed. We expect that partner organizations will integrate computer technology and their computer centers into other services they offer, making the connection to technology indispensable.

In the long-term, we envision a sustainable program that can grow to include other computer centers across the country, making bilingual computer training for Latino entrepreneurs accessible so that individuals have access to the valuable tools they need to start and grow their businesses.

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